



Vince O'Meara

Majors: Secondary education, English

Activities: Varsity baseball

Internships: I student taught at United Township High School in East Moline, Ill

Post-grad plans: I will be teaching English at Moline High School and coaching freshman baseball at Davenport North School.

“Vince O'Meara has actually accomplished ‘more than I imagined’ he could. Despite the fact that he transferred here and started the education program late, he is graduating on time—all due to his talent, effort and consistent willingness to work hard to achieve his goals. In fact, even though it is only March, he already has a teaching job and a coaching job. This does not surprise me because he is one of the best future teachers I have worked with. Vince will represent himself and Augustana’s education department well.”

— Katie Hanson, assistant professor, education

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2019

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

Why Augustana?

I transferred into Augustana as a sophomore. I had attended a community college and was ready to make the change to a four-year college. I looked at many small liberal arts colleges across Illinois and Iowa, but Augustana stuck out from the rest. As soon as I got in the car to leave my campus visit, I told my parents this was where I wanted to be. I am from the Quad Cities but had never really been on campus. I had only driven by or visited the athletic facilities. I was amazed by everything Augustana had to offer once I took the time to go and see the school.

Are you where you thought you'd be when you first came to campus?

Being a transfer student, I came into Augustana a bit behind my sophomore classmates. I declared my majors late and was worried I would have to spend a fifth year in college in order to graduate. Fortunately, I was placed with an advisor who went above and beyond to help me. My advisor completed paperwork that allowed me to take additional credits without having to spend extra money and allowed me to take some of my major courses out of sequence, so I could have the opportunity to graduate on time.

Of course, this required some extra work on my part, but I would have never been given the opportunity if it not for my advisor and professors. Their willingness to help me work at an accelerated pace is truly incredible. Without their kindness, there is no way I would be on track to graduate on time with the majors I have.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

I have so many people I could thank, but the person who sticks out the most is my advisor, Katie Hanson. I met Katie when I was a sophomore, and she is the person most responsible for my success at Augustana. Katie has always been there for me when I needed help, fresh ideas or encouragement. She has helped me form connections in the community, provided stellar help in my job searches and with opportunities for scholarships, given me a job as a student worker, and that is only the beginning.

I could write a book on how much Katie Hanson has helped me improve as a student, teacher and person. Augustana should be proud to have faculty members who show as much genuine interest and care for students as Katie does.

Peak experience?

My peak experience took place during my senior winter and spring. I was receiving one good piece of news right after another. I finished student teaching, completed testing for my license, earned a job, played baseball in Florida with my friends, and so much more. It just felt like all the hard work I had put in was starting to pay off. I was seeing the results I had been dreaming about for years, and I was getting to share the good news with my family and friends.

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What surprised you?

The improvements I made by being perseverant surprised me the most. There were many times I wanted to give up and walk away because things became very difficult and overwhelming, but with the support of my family and the people I met at Augustana, I was given the strength and confidence to push forward. I can reflect on those busy times and be proud of the determination I had to be the best I could be and make the most of my time as a Viking.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I used my Augie Choice when I student taught during my senior year. This helped me buy professional clothing and pay bills since I did not have time to work during my unpaid internship. Augie Choice allowed me to enjoy this experience instead of having to worry about how I was going to pay for it.

What will you miss the most?

My time has gone by quickly, and it is hard to believe I will be leaving so many wonderful people once I graduate. Luckily, the relationships I have formed here are so strong and positive that I believe I will have no problem keeping in touch with the friends, both students and professors, that I made here.

Advice for the Class of 2023?

You can do anything at Augustana. Work hard and believe in yourself because this is a place that sets students up for success. Try new things and be proud of who you are.